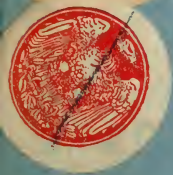


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THE COMING OF PEACE

JESSIE E. SAMPTER



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THE COMING OF PEACE

The Coming of Peace

JESSIE E. SAMPTER

NEW YORK

1919

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*Brother, my brother, I slew thee with my hand,
And spilt, to serve a righteous cause, thy blood
upon the land :*

*Brother, my brother, I cannot understand
Why I, to keep the Lord's command, must break
the Lord's command.*

The Coming of Peace

EMANU-EL: GOD IS WITH US

Now shall he come for whom the nations waited.

Salvation is inward, saith the Lord,
Salvation is of all the peoples.
Not of the king that rules—though he be David—
Not of armies, not of banners and trumpets.
Salvation is an inward word,
Nearer than hands or feet;
Not the clap of the thunder, but the still small voice.
And he shall sit enthroned in every bosom,
Seeing with every eye, speaking with every tongue.
His speech shall be the speech of multitudes,
For every man shall be a chosen prophet, called by
his name.

Now shall he come for whom the nations waited.

And all shall hail him, and every man acknowledge
him:
The Christians shall call him Christ, the Buddhists
Buddha,
The Brahmins hail Nirvana—the time of peace.
But we shall say: He is Messiah,
The warrior of the Lord, whose sword is spirit,
Whose shield is justice and not brass,
Whose armies are his conquering will.

T h e C o m i n g o f P e a c e

The little idols lying crushed and scattered,
Men shall forget they ever worshipped these;
Men shall forget their feuds of tribal faiths,
And call him by the name of every faith;
And every faith in its own name
Shall reverence only him.

Now shall he come for whom the nations waited.

Up from the ashes of devastation,
The waste and dirtiness of battle,
The broken hearts, the broken families,
The aged forsaken,
The mother nursing her dead babies,
The maiden hopeless,
The right hand withered, and the shattered knees;
He shall arise upon the grovelling world;
Up from the trenches shall crawl the lovers of peace,
And the haters of monarchy shall step down from
their thrones.

Now shall he come for whom the nations waited.

And nations shall liberate themselves with councils,
Not others with the sword;
For he shall speak to man from every neighbor
Words reverent and awful,
And mothers seeing him shall have respect to their
small children,

T h e C o m i n g o f P e a c e

And foes shall stand reprov'd before their foes.
Having seen death and tasted dust and ashes,
The world shall know its life, at last.
Are not the stars but snowflakes of eternity?
And what is snow but smaller stars and planets?
And all his speech, who spake and the world was?
Would you have understanding of creation?
Then look within: He is making you to-day.
“Not by might and not by power, but by my spirit,
saith the Lord of hosts”;
Not by signs and wonders in the heavens, but by the
vision of righteousness within the soul of man.

THE LASH OF GOD

Empires are my lashes, saith the Lord,
Egypt and Assyria were my lashes
Wherewith I whipped the nations.

Rome was a lash to shatter idols;
With their own follies God corrects the nations,
And when the lash is used, God breaks it.

Egypt and Assyria, Greece and Persia,
Rome and Byzantium—broken, all are broken:
And thou, too, shalt be broken, O arrogant empire!

The nations have sinned, robbing and beating,
But one that is a robber has outwitted them
Because he is strongest in the den of thieves.

They have no law but their own law, denying God;
They make God an idol, the god of each nation—
Who is the God of all nations.

One of themselves is their swift sword of doom,
And therefore God saith: Be thou strongest that art
vilest,
Be my chosen to punish; my Messiah, to destroy.

The nations perceive and repent;
They forget their own sin in a greater horror;
They say: We are as snow, we are innocent.

The Coming of Peace

They say: We must crush the oppressor!
When you are as snow, O nations, when you are innocent,
Then shall you break the yoke of your oppressor.

Behold, you have banded against the destroyer,
And already you wrangle for lust of the spoils;
And while you wrangle he seizes the spoils.

Fear not, O nations, my chosen, saith the Lord,
I shall yet save you alive,
But with a great fire shall I burn away the lusts of man.

But first you must be scourged with suffering,
But first you must be lashed with agony
And startled into purity with fear.

Then shall I break the lash that lashed you.
Then shall I end all empires and also this empire,
And all nations shall serve me, saith the Lord.

.
O my Father, that made me from the beginning,
And put into my heart the law of nations,
Before whose throne I shrivel to dust,
Before whose light mine eyes are consumed,
What shall I do in this day of the nations
When I have come to dwell in a land that is good?

T h e C o m i n g o f P e a c e

For my country is the least of sinners,
Young in sin and upward striving,
Yet she, too, is caught and scourged into the fray.

I came of old of that little nation which holds the
 law of nations;
I have died a thousand deaths to purge me of lust;
How shall I serve today my country and my God?

The Coming of Peace

WHAT IS MAN?

What is Man more than a beast?
What is he, as much as the beast?

For each of these, battling the battle of life,
Dies in the strife or conquers what it seeks:

Nesting for birds, and for the ant societies,
Teeth to the lion, and claws, and a magnificent
spring;
The majesty of loneliness,
The holiness of strength.

The little blossom conquers:
Its beauty calls the bee.
The little microbe conquers:
Its teeth devour a man.

But Man has not conquered.
The son of Man is grovelling still.
What was said to Man in the beginning of days,
What is the domain of Man, his from of old?
*Have dominion over the fish of the sea,
And over the fowl of the air and over every living thing.*
One kingly family are the sons of Man.

The Coming of Peace

Is Man a tiger that he craves for his own blood?
Is he an ant that he craves for his own slavery?
Is not man Man?
Is he not one?
How shall he then devour himself,
And wound himself and crush himself,
And, limping, maddened with his blood,
Go forth and tear his wife and child?
Is he not mad?
More mad than the fierce tiger?
For this is what the tiger needs:
To kill his neighbors all about.
And yet he kills not half so well
As Man, who needs his neighbor man to live.

To the tiger solitude and strength,
And to the bird a nest,
And to the bee a hive,
And to the moose a herd,
And to the savage man a tribe,
And to the man of God the earth,
This whole round earth, to conquer it.

Cities they builded, beautiful and horrible,
Beautiful with images and horrible with slaves,
And pleasant homes and garden lands,
And fruitful women rearing sons.

The Coming of Peace

So good, so far,
Both good and bad,
And glad and sad,
All striving still
To conquer all the earth.

And then, at once, the madness comes,
The slaves arise at master's bidding,
And slay and slash,
And crush and crash,
And break and burn
With howl and thunder
And hate and violence,
Lay waste the land—
The land they planted—
Destroy the cities, leave them heaps—
The cities that they builded—
And kill the children—
Their own children they conceived and loved and
reared—
And starve the mothers and violate the daughters—
Their own mothers, their own daughters—
And in a day, with danger and with toil,
Undo their striving of a thousand years.

Where is the deepest ruin?
In the heart of Man.
Broken, broken, broken,

The Coming of Peace

All the pleasant places.
Hate becomes a virtue,
Virtue is as treason;
He that speaks of peace
Is as one abetting murder;
One must love to kill
If he loves to live!
Reason is madness;
Madness is reason.

Come, you tigers,
You little ants and spiders,
You birds and bees and microbes,
Behold, the dominion is gone from Man.
For the king arose in the night, and in a fit of madness
He has slain his son, and there is no succession.
Behold, O beasts that Man has held in leash:
The leash is broken, for Man is broken.

Behold, the wolves prowl on the battlefield,
And as much of his own flesh as Man has left
So much will they crack from the bones.
Why not? Why grudge them that?
For Man, withal he likes to kill his brother,
Disdains to eat his brother.
Yet which is worse, to kill or to devour?
And if the men are starving, so also are the wolves.

The Coming of Peace

Return, O earth, to your estate of strife!
Some distant planet holds the key to life.

Best killer of all beasts, O Man, O son of Man!
But if you lose, then who shall win?
For yours was a great stake to win,
This whole round earth for every child of Man.
At night a horror came to me:
I saw the conqueror of Man,
The little microbe, best of killing beasts,
I saw him breed in battle's filth,
I saw him feed on hate and hunger.
I saw the millions fall as one,
Surprised, and unprepared for such a peace.
And after many years, I saw again:
Behold, the wasps were nesting in our libraries,
And scattered books printed in many tongues with
 none to read
Were chewed by beasts to make soft nesting places,
And ancient slimy creatures of the deep
Were trailing through our ruined, gaping streets.

Is there not one to cry aloud:
*Back to your lines, O Man, the battle calls,
The battle that the Lord of hosts proclaimed when Man
was made.*

T h e C o m i n g o f P e a c e

Once the Lord chose a nation to guide the nations,
Once he proclaimed the law, that God is one and
Man is one,

And he said to this nation: All nations are brothers,
And my house shall be called a house of prayer for
all the peoples.

Where is that nation now?

Why does it not arise and cry?

Oh, may its hands keep clean of blood,

And may its lips keep clean of hate!

For it is broken among all the nations,

It drinks blood also from the cup of battle,

But not in battle is its cup of triumph.

Is there still hope, has man a hope?

For this nation is outcast, tortured and despised.

THE TEN WORDS

which God spoke to the Jews three thousand years ago, in the wilderness of Sinai, and which all the Western world pretends to obey today. This is a transcription to fit present-day uses.

(1) I am the Lord thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, who have given thee my land to dwell in, and have scattered thee abroad among all the nations, and have kept thee a people for two thousand years that thou mightst again return to my land to serve me.

(2) Thou shalt have no other King beside me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any idol of any thing or person, neither of a beast; not of thy child, not of thy beloved, not of thy family, not of thy ruler or thy leader whom thou shalt choose, nor of thy people, or thy nation, not of anything in heaven or sea or land.

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, not serve only them, for I the Lord thy God am a universal God, visiting the shortcomings of every man upon all his fellows, and the mistakes of the parents upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of those that forsake me; and showing mercy

The Coming of Peace

unto all the millions of those that seek me and discover my laws to keep them.

(3) Thou shalt not use the name of the Lord thy God for false purposes, to oppress thy brother or to contend with him; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who uses his name to do wrong.

(4) Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the day for refreshment with the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy family, nor thy helper, nor he that labors in thy city or thy field to supply thee. For the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and blessed them, that they might rejoice in life. Wherefore the Lord created one day of rest that all men might rejoice thereon equally in freedom and life.

(5) Honor thy father and thy mother, and despise not their counsel and wisdom and traditions, that thou mayst be found worthy to build up the life of generation after generation in the land which the Lord thy God gives thee.

(6) Thou shalt not kill violently, either man or beast. When it is necessary to kill, it shall be done without cruelty and according to Law.

T h e C o m i n g o f P e a c e

(7) Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not pollute the future of thy people.

(8) Thou shalt not steal, directly or indirectly, either little or much.

(9) Thou shalt not testify falsely against thy neighbor nor deceive to thy profit or his loss.

(10) Thou shalt not covet to possess thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet to possess thy neighbor's land nor his labor nor his machinery nor his bread, nor anything that is thy neighbor's, but only that which is rightfully thine to use it.

The Coming of Peace

THE HUNDRED MILLION

To Woodrow Wilson, after his address of February 11, 1918.

You are no taller than I,
You are no broader than I,
You are a man like any one of us:
And you are one,
And we are a hundred million.

But now there is no man or child,
Except the idiot, dotard, babe,
That does not know and speak your name;
Though you be one
And we be a hundred million.

And, stranger still, there is not one
Except the idiot, dotard, babe,
In whose name you have not spoken to the whole
 world:
And you are one,
And we are a hundred million.

You have gathered us, one by one;
You have learned from us, one by one;
You have come to speak the speech of all of us;
And you are one,
And we are a hundred million.

The Coming of Peace

You have made of us a nation;
You have shaped for us the speech of the spirit,
Saying: We shall follow whithersoever justice leads.
And you are one,
And we are a hundred million.

We shall march behind you,
We shall carry our banner above you,
Making divers music for the armies of humanity.
For we are one,
Though we be a hundred million.

Blessed are we that have been given a leader;
Blessed are we that have been given a spokesman!
May he gather up our wisdom and our understanding.
For you are not one:
You are a hundred million.

THE NEW FLAG

I beheld a white flag with a circle of red stars upon it,
And I asked: What is this flag with the circle of red
stars upon it?

Then he said: This is the flag of all the nations,
With a star for every nation;
Great or small, strong or weak,
Every nation has a star like every other,
And none can tell which nation has which star.

The Coming of Peace

WITH A STRONG HAND

For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, admonishing me that I should not walk in the way of this people.—
Isaiah, VIII, 11.

He that asks shall be answered,
The answer shall smite him as he speaks his word.
My prayers are a question,
I say: What is thy will?—not: Do my will.

I poured forth my heart to him that made it,
I cried aloud to him who created the voice.

He that hears the thrill of a leaf,
And the hissing of stars and planets,
That knows every leap of the grasshopper,
That has counted the stars and the grubs,
He knows man's heart in its secret places:
The thought and the dream, the willed and the un-
willed;
He knows both friend and foe, for all are his children,
And all are his servants speeding to do his will.

I poured forth my heart to him who made the human
heart,
On the day when men choose their leaders and choose
their masters,

The Coming of Peace

And I said: Will they not choose thee
And that which is good in thy sight?
Art not thou the voice in the heart
That each man should choose uprightness?

And he said: No.
Shall he that sits in heaven always weep?
Can he not laugh, too?
Therefore they that must make others free by killing
them
Shall forge their own chains tighter and more taut;
And they that must starve others into liberation
Shall feed themselves sparingly in self-appointed
bondage.
They must now give their children to Moloch to
murder and be murdered,
Because they served his shrine so long!
Shall I not be a stumbling block to these?
Shall I not be a snare to their wild feet?
Shall not they evade my shepherds
And run scampering into the lion's den?
Can they be wiser than their wisdom,
Or have more judgment than their brains allow?
It is they that do it, and not I;
I am not with them, but against them,
To make them my servants,
That they do my will.

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Lord, I am no better than my brothers.
Let me be like them;
Make me blind.
Why is this glare within mine eyes,
This hand of burning steel upon my heart,
That I must see the madness of the greed that caused
 this sorrow,
The rottenness of lust that craved their sacrifice?
Lord, if I must suffer this suffering with them,
Let me at least think it noble.
Lord, I am no better than my neighbors.
Why must I stand alone against them?
Why must my hand be against every man's hand,
And I a seeker of peace?
Why hast thou lifted me upon thy holy mountain,
To see above the battle-line, to see humankind as
 one;
To see the madness when I myself am in it?
Release me from this fearful condemnation,
Loosen thy grip, for I am broken and I am but dust.

And he said: No.
Behold, but a little while, and the struggle will cease,
A little longer, and all shall be broken as you are
 broken;
And they that tightened their own chains,
And they that voted themselves into slavery,
Shall be confounded.

The Coming of Peace

The Lord shall confound them,
Because the undreamed-of shall come to pass,
And the uncalculated shall reveal itself,
And out of their own hearts shall the vision come.

Seal up the testimony, gather the witnesses,
Be silent, and wait:
The day shall come for you to speak,
For you are on my side, saith the Lord;
I have laid my hand upon you,
You cannot escape, you cannot do otherwise.
Is it not enough that you serve me?
Must you have the crowd, too?

Election Day, November 6, 1917.

THE PUNISHMENT

You have defrauded, you have enslaved,
You have humbled and you have enraged,
You have taken from children their childhood,
From women their motherhood,
And made men cringe.
You have cheated the landless of bread,
The widow of her wage;
You have caught the simple with sophistry
To drive them from their houses,
You have stolen whole lands and oppressed them,
You have called men savages that you might treat
 them savagely,
You have been smooth-tongued and rough-handed,
And you have hired the murderer to slay for you, and
 paid him with the gallows.

If I have done these things, what is my punishment?
If I have seen these things and held my peace, what
 is my punishment?

This is your punishment: that you must kill.

T h e C o m i n g o f P e a c e

THE COMMON SIN

Wherever man has lived man has murdered;
Every inch of our houses is built on blood-soaked
ground.

Were we not beasts, and are we not now men?
We dare to live and build on the ruins we have made.

And also to forget,
And also to forgive.

Is not our task as great as that primal creature's
Into whose heart God breathed the spirit of man?

We must work together, sinner with sinner,
For all alike have bathed in this sin of blood.

REJECTED

They have rejected me because I love not only them
but also their foes;

My people has driven me forth because I spoke to
them of brotherhood.

Lord God of all the hosts, I stand alone before thee:
Judge thou between us.

My people would shed the blood of my people,
All of them disguised, wearing masks of horror to
affright each other;

And I stand between them, I shall be stricken:
Let them make peace over the stricken body of peace.

My people has rejected me.
Because I refused to hate, they hated me;
But God also loves their foes, as well as them;
Therefore they have rejected God.

EUROPE, OUR MOTHER

Europe, our Mother, we have been orphaned.
Is there no more milk in thy breasts?
How have we sucked thy sweetness and grown in
 strength and beauty!
But we are children still.

We stray in a wilderness, chewing roots;
We are outcast from all gentleness.

I weep for Rheims,
I tremble for Venice,
But I tremble more for those who may know neither
 Rheims nor Venice.

Youth used to be good, but now it is better to be old,
To have nursed long, long at our mother's breasts.

I dreamed dreams in my youth;
The dreams of my youth were terrible and beautiful.
I slept on the edge of a cliff that I might awake to
 wide vision.

I built myself a booth in the new world's wilderness,
A room that was quiet and little, with place for a
 friend;
And our walls and our shelves were lined with lovely
 ancient things,
Gifts from our mother, Europe.

The Coming of Peace

Wagner and Verdi,
Goethe and Shelley,
Beethoven and Tschaikowsky,
Nietzsche and Bergson;
These were our teachers and these were our nurses;
And long was our youth,
With leisurely thought, with dreaming of beauty,
Of beauty and truth and goodness, of art and knowl-
edge and life.

Europe is dying;
She has no more milk.
Dreams are dying;
The young must fight:
They shall not know Rheims or Venice,
And their music will be the drum.
Hunger shall drive them more than love,
Thirst more than curiosity,
And they shall seek forgetfulness, not dreams.

O Mother Europe, thou, too, art ruined with war,
As Greece was ruined, as Rome was ruined,
And thy greatness becomes as a name that is
written,
And thy beauty as a half-forgotten song.

Where is the world's hope?



THE LITTLE NATION

I am the little nation, saith Israel,
I am the little one that was slain by the sword.

Two thousand years ago I was defeated, destroyed,
By Rome the victorious giant.

I was broken and scattered,
Persecuted and despised.

But I said: I am God's people.
The sword cannot destroy and the sword cannot
create,
But the word of the Lord shall destroy and create.

The glory of Rome is past,
And the empire of Rome is shattered,
But still I live.

I am greater to-day, I am younger to-day, I am
stronger to-day
Than those who were born when I was old.

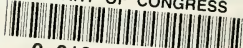
And the land whence I was driven calls to me,
And the nations call to me: Return!

What is gained by knowledge and justice is from
everlasting to everlasting;
But what is gained by the sword shall be lost by
the sword.

*We have sown the seas with grain
And the fields with blood :
Rise, O souls of all the slain,
Reap harvests from the flood.*

*We have scattered brawn and brain
To make heroic stench :
Yet the voice that tortured Cain
Is howling from the trench.*

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